

I CLAIM:

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1. A structural element for enclosing or supporting hot operating machinery, comprising:
- (a) a structural member for enclosing or supporting a hot operating machinery; and
 - (b) means defining a plurality of micro-cavities on the outer surface of said structural member for mitigating ignition of a flammable liquid that comes into contact with said structural member, said micro-cavities being sized to minimize seepage of the liquid into said micro-cavities because of the surface tension of the liquid.
2. The structural element of claim 1 wherein said micro-cavities are in the form of holes of selected shape defined in the surface of said structural member.
3. The structural element of claim 1 wherein said micro-cavities are in the form of grooves defined in the surface of said structural member.
4. The structural element of claim 2 wherein the centerline of said holes is non-perpendicular to said surface of said structural member.
5. A structural element for enclosing or supporting hot operating machinery, comprising:
- (a) a structural member for enclosing or supporting a hot operating machinery; and
 - (b) a porous sintered coating on said structural member defining a plurality of micro-cavities in the surface of said coating for mitigating ignition of a flammable liquid that comes into contact with said coating, said micro-cavities being sized to minimize seepage of the liquid into said micro-cavities because of the surface tension of the liquid.